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8 August 1958

MEMORANDUM FOR: DDI

SUBJECT : General Cabell's Concern Over Planning Board Review  
of CRITIC System and NSCIDs

1. General Cabell called me this morning to object to scheduling the Report to the NSC on Critical Intelligence Communications and the new NSCIDs on Foreign Intelligence Coordination, COMINT and ELINT for PB review (they now go to PB on 22 Aug and NSC on 28 Aug). He wanted them lifted from the Planning Board agenda and submitted to NSC alone.

2. We cordially agreed to disagree. I explained that it was regular practice to have the PB consider items going to the NSC, even when these were merely "information" items, e.g. reports to the NSC. In the latter case the PB did not alter the report; the purpose was merely: (a) to inform the PB members so they could brief their principals as to what to expect; and (b) to permit the PB to make appropriate comments, if any, to the Council. I'm not sure Cabell realizes, though I told him, that PB does not have right to change the Report on NSCIDs in any way or to buck them back. In fact, he said he had no objection to their just being informed.

3. But as I get it, General Cabell's real point is one of IAC prestige, i.e. going through the PB and then having the principals briefed by their PB members violates the principle that the intelligence chiefs should be the ones to advise their principals. To him, this is another example of downgrading the intelligence chiefs. For this reason, intelligence procedures should not ever go through the Planning Board. I commented, perhaps incautiously, that occasionally this might operate to our benefit by making us the sole intelligence spokesman, but no score on this.

4. General Cabell wants you to try and get the items removed from the Planning Board agenda, if it can be done casually and without raising the above issue of principle. I think this can be done, if necessary, and told him so, recalling a number of reports that had not gone through PB first (though grounds here were generally security). We could tell Gordon Gray: (a) that the items aren't the sort of thing on which PB should waste its time; (b) we would prefer that the Council members be

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briefed in advance through intelligence channels not Planning Board channels. We have to break a precedent, however, since the earlier revisions were discussed by the PB on 13 February following a briefing by you or Obbie.

5. But I would still disagree with General Cabell on the overall issue. To me his principle that intelligence procedures should be handled only through intelligence channels conflicts with the more important principle that the PB, like the Ops Deps, performs an indispensable function in screening and reviewing even these matters for their principals so that nitpicks or other resolvable problems do not first appear at the NSC itself. This is sound staff procedure, as I stressed to General Cabell.

6. Moreover, I infer from his remarks that you and he may have differed on this before. In any event he thinks that you, he and DCI should sit down some time and discuss this matter.

/ s /

R. W. KOWEN

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